

Examiners' Report

June 2019

GCE English Language 9EN0 01

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June 2019

Publications Code 9EN0_01_1906_ER

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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide centres with an insight into the assessment process and give an overview of how candidates approached each question. This series, candidates engaged positively with the data and produced some developed and analytical responses. Responses demonstrated that the texts provided enough source material to allow candidates to achieve in the higher levels and accommodate weaker candidates.

Candidates' approach to their analysis demonstrated appropriate knowledge and understanding of the requirements of each question, but the majority of candidates tended to be more successful on question 1 highlighting a need for a more developed understanding of the criteria for question 2. There is still too much emphasis on detailing historical events in Section B at the expense of conducting focused analysis on the data itself.

As with last year, there were a small percentage of candidates who wrote their responses in the incorrect section of the answer booklet. Candidates are reminded to signpost this error, so that examiners can take appropriate action to ensure all work is marked and awarded. There were some cases where candidates had written their response to Section B in the answer booklet, but their full response to Section A on extra paper. Extra paper is to be used in the event that candidates run out of space in the answer booklet, not as an alternative. Centres are encouraged to provide candidates with opportunities to familiarise themselves with the content and format of the examination paper, ensuring that they have a clear understanding of the requirements of each question before the exam.

The paper is divided into two sections, providing an opportunity for an extended comparative analysis in both Section A and Section B. Candidates are invited to analyse four texts representative of the spoken and written modes of language. Each section contains one question worth 30 marks each. Candidates must answer both questions.

Section A: Individual Variation: This section provides two 21st century linked texts/data assessing candidates understanding of how individuals convey personal and social identity. In this series, candidates were required to analyse two examples of written language. Text A was a newspaper article detailing an interview with actor RJ Mitte discussing the challenges he has faced living with Cerebral Palsy and stereotypical attitudes towards his disability. Text B was also a written interview with activist Malala Yousufzai discussing her early life living in oppression and experiencing discrimination on the basis of her gender.

Section B: Variation over Time: This section provides two unseen, thematically linked texts from two different time periods assessing candidates' understanding of historical variation. This series, the theme was improving health and wellbeing and candidates compared two written texts; a document published in 1576 and an article from an online magazine published in 2017.

Question 1

As with previous series, candidates were more successful answering this section showing strong understanding of the different linguistic methods used to convey identity. The data was accessible for the candidates, demonstrated by the vast majority scoring in Level 2-4.

In this series, both of the texts featured interviews with prominent individuals, written by journalists. Candidates demonstrated an awareness of the different ways in which an interviewee can be presented making reference to the interviewee's physical appearance, manner, the context of the interview, their actions, and the things they said. The written discourse contained a number of features to present the identities of RJ Mitte and Malala Yousufzai including use of third person, direct speech, indirect speech and narrative summary which provided a wealth of material to use in response to the question. Some candidates approached their analysis from the perspectives of the subjects, 'Malala presents herself as...' while others referred to the journalists, 'The writer/interviewer presents Malala as...' which were both equally valid.

The discriminator between the success of responses was meaningful engagement with the data, range of features and relevant discussion of personal and social identity. Candidates who structured their responses by comparing both texts simultaneously were able to address the similarities and differences between the texts more effectively as opposed to those that analysed each text in turn, then provided a summary conclusion at the end. Those placed in the higher levels covered a range of language features making some sophisticated points regarding grammatical structures. They were able to link language to context discussing how the writers conveyed social and personal identity while applying concepts and issues to enhance their points. Stronger candidates were those who showed thoughtful insight into the creation and sustaining of quite complex identities. There was a greater sense that these candidates were able to understand that identity, and its linguistic construction, is multifaceted and not a series of binary opposites.

Overall, there were generally two main approaches which resulted in strong analysis. One was framework-led, and the other was more guided by an over-arching of key ideas, representations and communicative intents. The former had the advantage of ensuring a wide-ranging engagement with each text across a range of linguistic evidence and analytical methods while the latter led, to a response in which students successfully integrated different levels of analysis within a highly coherent argument. Some candidates took a themed approach, which worked well, starting with the theme that united both texts, for example, overcoming hardships, then analysing this until differences started to appear and using that as a structure to first compare then contrast. Both approaches were underpinned by the precision of selecting relevant examples from the data, consistent exploration of meanings and effects of language features and the use of concepts to illuminate issues, ideas and interpretations of identity.

There was some convincing analysis of the use of active/passive voice, modality and syntactic parallelism linked to the construction of identity. Synthetic personalisation was almost ubiquitous, with some candidates using it to analyse the construction of roles and relationships referencing Malala's call to unity and Mitte's distancing from those who bullied him and motivating others to be resilient. In comparison, weaker candidates made general links to direct address and inclusive pronouns to connect with the audience. Higher level candidates identified themes of discrimination and resilience in the texts and explored the significant differences between the identities of RJ Mitte and Malala. This included engaging with the complexities and contradictions embodied by these two celebrities i.e. simultaneously Hollywood star and victim for RJ Mitte and world-famous campaigner versus ordinary girl for Malala.

Theories such as convergence, positive/negative face and gender were applied with varying success. Gender analysis was more confident this year with some good discussion around Tannen

rather than Lakoff. Tannen was used to guide analysis in a more critical and evaluative way and not gender-bound, demonstrating how the two interviewees could be analysed as both refute Tannen's functions in places while meeting them in others. A consistent misapplied theory was the work of Jean Aitchison utilising the damp spoon theory to discuss laziness in language applied to anything deemed non-standard.

Mid-level scripts made good use of the data and pointed out connections of discrimination and strength/determination. Their analysis however was often superficial and limited to simply pointing out these features. They displayed a tendency to label concepts, especially those in relation to gender theory. Candidates generally met the criteria for this question however, mid-level scripts lacked the development of their points to score in the higher levels.

The main deficiencies in the lower levels were the lack of close analysis of the texts at word and sentence level and a lack of sufficient lexical, grammatical and semantic terminology to justify the points being made. There was some use of theory which was often not supported by close textual analysis or by specific terminology. The weakest responses were those that demonstrated little to no linguistic skills, but simply narrated meaning in both texts.

This is an extract from a Level 5 script, which scored 25 for question 1.

Text A and B begin with the ^{initial personal accounts and} ~~personal accounts and~~ ~~introductions~~ introduction ~~to~~ of interviewees. But both are very different in scope, although they are introductions, text A's introduction is more diegetic in comparison to text B. "Growing up, I didn't see anyone like me on TV." ~~The~~ the diegetic expression "like me" relies on the reader's/audience's own interpretation of what RJ means when,

~ saying this. The ^{diotic} ~~new~~ "like" suggests connotation to a difference or abnormality that made R-J seem abnormal and not human. This creates synthetic personalisation as the audience's ~~new~~ cognitive responses are influenced by this suggestive presumption made, because of the ~~interviewer's~~ description to their individuality. "Like" is also ~~mitigat~~ a mitigated expression, ~~as it is~~ because of its diexis, it becomes suggestive; rather than directly claiming the disability that he has ~~person~~.

Conversely, Malala in text B, is very direct with the ~~problem~~ disadvantage that persists. Even in this modern-era females are still restricted to ^{becoming} ~~being~~ educated, which is what led to her outburst of independence and leadership. The modals of obligation (Aaliiday) are displayed during this interview, where Malala ~~the~~ expresses her opinions ~~the~~ through the use of modals in order to assert her certainty in what she claimed. "modal auxiliaries such as "would", "should" and "could" connote possibilities, however, she intensifies them by using them as imperative obligations, whereby she did not have any other option and these were her last resorts. "I would have two or three children", synthetic personalisation is a similarity ^{both} ~~both~~ texts pertain, however, text B's use of this is different to text A's. ^{This is because} ~~because~~ ~~although~~ most of these modals are ~~the~~ suggestive, encouraging the audience to think for themselves and to think about the possible consequences that Malala has endured, such as an assassination attempt; ^{they are also} ~~these modals~~ ~~are~~ imperative and ~~the~~ disregard any possibility of chance.



This candidate has identified that RJ Mitte has felt under represented in the media which has led to feelings of alienation.

This is further supported by the analysis of 'like me' which eludes to a difference in his experience, rather than reference his disability explicitly.

They then discuss how this allows the audience to connect with him by sharing his perspective of growing up feeling different to others.

This is then effectively compared with Malala's use of modality to convey the limitations of her life choices growing up in a culture where women are oppressed.



When selecting examples from the data, explore them in detail linking to contextual factors (AO3), use terminology (AO1) and examine connections across the texts.

Both Mitte & Malala challenge stereotypes ^{surrounding} ~~around~~ the issues they have faced growing up therefore they are presented as inspirational. In text B Mitte presents himself as the victim by using the semantic field of hunting with the static verb 'prey' and pre-modifier 'vicious'. This will evoke sympathy in the audience as ~~Mitte presents his identity~~, however, Mitte then uses the simple sentence 'I stole my ground'. This ~~shows the audience~~ presents the speaker's identity as determined and strong minded which will be highly inspirational for anyone suffering from bullying who is reading the article. ~~According to the text at Fairclough Mitte uses syntactic personalisation~~ In the first sentence of this article Mitte uses the verb phrase 'growing up, I didn't see anyone like me on TV'. This is again reflecting how he presents himself as inspirational as he can now act as a role model to children. There is a growing issue with ^{lack of} diversity in the media with the minority groups not being fully represented. So Mitte becoming a

^{an actor}
~~star in the media~~ increases the diversity that is
 so more children will have a role model
 well needed. In text B Malala is seen to
 challenge gender stereotypes as she fights to be
 a voice for uneducated young girls. She is, like
 Milla, presented as inspirational. ~~are de~~
^{The} ~~the~~ bi-edic structure of 'she took on the Taliban,
 survived an assassination attempt and re-founded
 the Malala Fund' shows her audience that she has
 fought against stereotypes to fight for what she
 believes in. The repetition of the stative verb
 'fear' in ^{simple} ~~perfect~~ ~~such~~ declarative sentences such
 as 'I feared the life that many girls are suffering
 through right now' reflects the ~~persuasi~~ persuasive
 function and her battle against stereotypes.*



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Examiner Comments

The candidate uses a range of terminology, establishes a clear connection between the texts and maintains a focus on how the language reflects the identity of the subjects.

They also make links to the function of portraying an inspirational self and understand they have challenged stereotypical ideas regarding disability and gender.

Question 2

The performance of this question is improving but continues to be less secure than question one.

Some candidates struggled to effectively explore and explain the features of language change between the two texts, often resorting to a descriptive identification of features and emphasis on historical features. As with last year, weaker candidates tend to digress into historical events in their analysis often going into great detail of events such as Caxton's printing press, Johnson's dictionary, Lowth's grammar books and the great vowel shift. Although, there was a reduction of this across the board. It's important that candidates recognise that writing at length about historical factors limits the opportunities to engage in more interesting comparisons between the data.

More successful candidates were able to demonstrate historical knowledge concisely in a few sentences, embedding it to support points with links to function or audience. Candidates are encouraged to maintain a focus on the data and avoid writing historical essays with limited linguistic analysis or reference to data. Some candidates analysed features such as orthography last which allowed them to begin their response with a focus on the different functions to inform and persuade and discuss the scientific advances in medicine and mental health.

High performing candidates effectively explored the concepts of language change, including ideas about religion, scientific advancements and social attitudes towards women and mental health. More confident candidates took a more holistic view and analysed the texts in terms of their contextual factors which was productive and they displayed more focus on drawing connections between the texts and making good use of data. They showed control and confidence in their responses, and really used the texts as evidence of a wider story of genre and language development and linking this to technological advances, literacy and the increasing needs of an educated society. They elaborated on how language specifically relating to healthy eating has changed, using relevant evidence such as lexical fields, pre-modification, adverbials and engaging with concepts to support their ideas.

A feature which was identified by both mid and high-level scripts was how both texts referenced sources to bolster their argument; the Bible and a Greek philosopher in Text C and specialists in nutrition in Text D. Stronger scripts developed this connection with references to power while mid-level scripts tended to simply point it out. The majority of the candidates successfully identified the rhetorical questions as headings in Text D to attract and persuade the audience and recognising that there were now links between diet and emotions in the 21st century. Some candidates explored this further by discussing the stereotypes referenced in the article with regards to women and comfort foods such as ice cream and acknowledging changes in lifestyle and responsibilities in the modern day.

The majority of scripts scored in the mid to lower levels with the weakest showing an over-reliance on historical features with a tendency to make generalisations about the contexts of the texts. Overall, most candidates appeared able to produce detailed and extended pieces about the texts in each question suggesting that most candidates split their time evenly across the two texts. Some candidates produced long responses which only detailed the historical context of Text C, used limited terminology and failed to apply their knowledge to the data to demonstrate understanding.

This candidate scored 15 marks for question 2 which is mid Level 3, demonstrating clear relevant application.

the use of present participles such as 'worrying' and 'feeling' are used to create a sense of immediacy, as to ~~reflect~~^{suggest} that it is a current issue and helping it to achieve its purpose, to advise. Also in relation to text D, the vast array of sentence functions used further demonstrates how language has changed over time, as the use of exclamation marks such as '(healthier!)' aims to involve, engage or enthuse the reader, ^{and} the use of interrogatives such as 'Can't concentrate?' directly involves and addresses the reader, as does ~~and~~ the use of imperatives such as 'Eat a salmon burger', all of which help the text to achieve its influential and informative purpose.

In relation to lexis and semantics, the two texts demonstrate a contrast between the lexical field of religion, and the lexical field of science, which explicitly reflects the contexts of ~~each~~ each text. For example, in text C, the reference to the Bible verse 'Eccle. 31' highlights the importance of religion within the 16th century, and how this may be associated with health and well-being. In direct comparison, text D offers a more scientific approach, by referencing

Subject specific lexis and medical jargon such as 'homocystein' and 'serotonin'. Not only does this ~~text~~ demonstrate the contrasting societal values of each text, but the medical jargon of text D shows the advanced ~~level~~ of scientific awareness due to ~~a~~ increased research and technological developments, allowing for a higher specificity of lexis on the subject of health & and well being.

Also in relation to lexis and semantics, text D offers a considerable less specific range and specificity of lexis, and vocabulary. ~~For~~ For example, the reference to 'nourishment' reflects the lack of ingredient availability at the time, which contrasts to the very specific ^{references} ~~reference~~ to 'longfat fortified milk, ~~these~~ fortified cereals or mushrooms', reflecting the wider availability of foods and ingredients of the time. It is also important to consider ideas of semantic change, as 'meates' is referred to in text C, possibly referring to all food in general as opposed to animal flesh, which is contrasted in text B D, in which food groups have emerged, as suggested by the wide variety of fish named 'salmon, herring, sardines and mackerel'. Text C



The candidate has selected relevant features for discussion and is linking them to changes within society and the approach to healthy eating.

They have used clear examples and are showing connections across the texts and linking to function. They miss opportunities to develop their points further such as linking the reference to biblical sources and scientists to power theories and the function of creating a knowledgeable, authoritative tone to the advice.

Higher level candidates discussed how these sources functioned to create confidence in the advice to the audience.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice.

- Employ effective time management in the examination to ensure that appropriate time is spent on each question in relation to the Assessment Objectives.
- Apply relevant theories and support with clear examples. Inserting a lot of irrelevant theory into the analysis can demonstrate misunderstanding.
- Comment on a range of features and address both texts equally. Do not limit responses to one set of data or to one discussion point.
- In question 2, don't limit answers to only discussing historical features and events making no reference to the data. Consider other contextual factors to produce a detailed, effective comparison. Make any discussion regarding historical events relevant and concise. Points can be supported with a few sentences - pages of information regarding Caxton's printing press or the great vowel shift will digress from the main criteria required for question 2.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

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